

LETTERS *to the Editor*

DOA for the AMA and CMA

To the Editor: The editorial in the June, 1971, CALIFORNIA MEDICINE titled "Hara-kiri and Its Consequences" reminds me of a personal experience when I was an assistant police surgeon at Georgia Street Hospital, Los Angeles.

A middle-aged oriental walked off the elevator holding his hands around a bloody shirt and when taken to the examining room it was found he had disemboweled himself without lacerating the intestine. In those days no antibiotics were available. Consequently, aqueous mercurochrome was poured liberally over the exposed intestine and it was replaced in the abdominal cavity and the transverse abdominal wound was closed. No complications ensued and the incision healed by primary intention.

Subsequently it was ascertained that the patient had a severe mental aberration and he was sent to the psychiatric ward of the Los Angeles County General Hospital.

Approximately three months later while I was on duty at the Georgia Street Hospital, a DOA body was brought to the hospital. It was that of the same man I had treated previously.

It was ascertained that upon his release from the psychiatric ward he had boarded a street car to downtown Los Angeles and there took an ele-

vator in a tall building, went to a window and jumped off a fire escape, falling through the roof of an automobile parked below.

It seems to me this case illustrates the points in your editorial. Similarly mental aberrations brought about the petitions for local referenda.

If the statewide opinion poll of CMA succeeds in disavowing the CMA and the AMA, the anticipated cure by the proponents will in the end result in the development of the kinds of consequences anticipated by your editorial, *viz.*, DOA for the AMA and CMA.

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A Hot Word from #AB 3,522,477

The following is a letter written by a California physician to the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs after examining the Bureau's new form for persons handling drugs.

United States Department of Justice
Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs
P.O. Box 28083, Central Station
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Sirs:

The recent form sent to all persons having a legitimate reason for handling drugs represents an appalling, illogical, uninformed, unadvised dictation by a governmental bureaucracy. The instructions and forms demonstrate the usual overly complex and nondirect method of writing.